



COMMITTEE ON

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

SAM GRAVES, REPUBLICAN LEADER

H.R. 3684 – the Majority’s “My Way or the Highway Bill 2.0”

Purpose:

- The Majority’s “My Way or the Highway Bill 2.0” doubles down on the same mandates, restrictive policies, and costly diversions of infrastructure resources that led to last year’s failure to provide long-term investments in America’s roads and bridges.
- The bill reauthorizes surface transportation programs at \$547 billion over 5 years, an 11% increase over last year’s partisan bill as introduced, before it ballooned to \$1.5 trillion on the House Floor.
- The bill moves further left rather than toward finding compromise, putting “a core piece of the *American Jobs Plan* into text” (according to the Majority’s press release).
- The bill fails to streamline the project review process, dramatically reduces flexibility for states and local partners to address their unique needs, and institutes policies and programs that favor urban infrastructure needs over those of smaller and rural communities.

Summary:

Puts *Green New Deal* Goals above Core Infrastructure Needs –

- Focuses foremost on climate and *Green New Deal* goals, with the largest funding increases pushed to transit and passenger rail, regardless of community needs, and before we know if transit ridership will ever return to pre-pandemic levels.
 - The bill diffuses its spending increases throughout new programs and eligibilities, and incorporates new departmental policy goals for safety, climate change, resilience, and environmental protection.
 - This bill increases transit funding by an even larger percentage than the Majority’s bill last year: now an **79% total increase** over the *FAST Act*, compared to an approximately 47% increase for highways, bridges, and safety. This increase does not include the many Member Designated Project requests for transit, which all count as Federal Highway Administration spending.
 - Rail funding receives an enormous increase even over the Majority’s bill last year: now providing an **850% increase** over the *FAST Act*, while re-establishing many of the failed policies that will help ensure Amtrak is never profitable.
 - While Committee Republicans also proposed higher funding levels (\$400 billion over 5 years), our bill focused on core functions, like roads and bridges, coupled with flexibility and significant regulatory reforms to reduce project delay costs.
- **An estimated \$1 out of every \$2 spent by this bill is tied up in *Green New Deal* goals**, either scattered throughout new programs or one of the many new green requirements injected into existing programs (\$31.1 billion in new programs; \$276 billion total over 5 years).

Fails To Address Costly Project Delays –

- This bill ignores the need to streamline the project review process and put in place reasonable review limits and timetables that won't harm environmental protections.
- When an average of [20-30% of infrastructure project costs are lost to red tape](#), up to approximately \$100 billion in this bill for roads and bridges alone will be wasted on project delays.
- The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee's bipartisan highway bill, which passed unanimously out of Committee in May 2021, includes these regulatory reforms that are broadly supported by labor, business, and transportation community leaders.

Reduces Flexibility –

- The bill's one-size-fits-all approach reduces flexibility for states and local partners to accomplish their unique projects and infrastructure priorities in favor of forcing its progressive Green New Deal agenda on our federal infrastructure programs. For example:
 - The bill's "Fix It First" policy places significant restrictions on building new roads. States have plans in place to help them prioritize projects, but forcing states to adopt a "worst-to-first" approach ignores new construction projects that may have a larger benefit than a maintenance project, and limits communities trying to accommodate new growth.
 - Sets aside 10% of Surface Transportation Program (STP) funding for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) (bike paths, recreational trails, etc.) and limits states' ability to transfer funds out of the TAP program while allowing states to use safety funds to cover TAP costs.

Leaves Behind Rural America –

- Despite claims to help rural infrastructure, following the money in the bill clearly shows the Majority's preference for programs and policies that favor urban over rural communities. Its *Green New Deal* focus and seismic shift toward urban transportation needs leave rural America behind.
 - For example, the Majority's Rebuild Rural grant program receives \$1 billion in funding while another new program to build electric charging stations that will largely benefit urban areas receives \$4 billion – 4 times more funding.
 - Rural communities don't want more grant programs to apply for – they want consistent, reliable funding through proven programs they know without new mandates and strings attached.
- A heavy urban focus ignores the fact that 71% of public road lane-mileage is in rural America, and crashes and fatalities on rural non-Interstate roads occur at more than double the rate as all other roads.
- Restrictions on building new roads and rural areas' struggles to compete with urban areas in programs preferred under this bill (such as transit and rail), illustrate how this partisan bill disadvantages rural, smaller, and suburban communities.